

Governors Lead Bipartisan Effort to Prevent Dangerous Seismic Testing and Offshore Drilling

Trump Administration Approves Offshore Airgun Use, Governor Carney Joins Atlantic Seaboard Governors Urging Protection for Our Coast

WILMINGTON, Del. – Following the announcement that the Trump Administration authorized airgun use in waters off the East Coast, Governor John Carney and a group of bipartisan governors today urged Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross and Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke to halt harmful seismic testing and offshore drilling in the Atlantic Ocean.

“As the governors of ten states on the Atlantic seaboard, we write to reiterate our strong opposition to seismic airgun surveys and oil and gas drilling off our coasts,” **the governors wrote**. “These activities pose an unacceptable and unnecessary threat to our coastal ecosystems and coastal economies.”

Today’s letter was signed by the following governors: Governor Charlie Baker of Massachusetts; Governor John Carney of Delaware; Governor Roy Cooper of North Carolina; Governor Andrew Cuomo of New York; Governor Larry Hogan of Maryland; Governor Dannel Malloy of Connecticut; Governor Henry McMaster of South Carolina; Governor Phil Murphy of New Jersey; Governor Ralph Northam of Virginia; and Governor Gina Raimondo of Rhode Island.

In November, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association Fisheries department [issued incidental harassment authorizations](#) (IHAs) for seismic airgun surveys to five companies searching for oil and gas deposits in the Atlantic. The decision follows months of vocal opposition from states along the East Coast, which have repeatedly urged the federal government to protect coastal tourism and fisheries by preventing seismic testing and offshore drilling.

In a letter sent today, the governors urged the U.S. Department of the Interior and the U.S. Department of Commerce to deny all permit applications for seismic testing, exclude the waters off the East Coast from the 2019-2024 National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program for offshore drilling, avoid issuing further IHAs for seismic airgun surveys and prevent any future offshore drilling efforts in the Atlantic Ocean.

“Drilling in the Atlantic would pose significant threats to Delaware’s natural resources and our economy,” said **Governor John Carney**. “I am proud to stand with fellow Atlantic state governors in opposition to seismic testing and drilling for oil and gas off our coasts. There’s too much at risk for Delaware and the Atlantic Seaboard to allow this to go unchallenged.”

The full letter is available [here](#).

Seismic testing and offshore drilling pose significant economic and environmental threats to communities along the Atlantic Coast, which [generate more than \\$98 billion in gross domestic product each year](#). Seismic airgun pulses can deplete fish populations that are vital for commercial and recreational fishing industries and offshore drilling increases the risk of catastrophic oil spills, which devastate marine life and tourism and hurt coastal economies. Hundreds of tourism associations, chambers of commerce, convention and visitors’ bureaus, trade groups, businesses, elected officials

and local governments have formally opposed seismic testing and offshore drilling.

For more information visit de.gov/nodrilling.

###

Related news:

[Governor Carney Signs Legislation to Protect Delaware's Coastal Waters and Economy](#)